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ABSTRACT

Essays on the present and future states of research and development (R&D) units in colleges and universities are collected. The essays served as discussion papers for an annual meeting of heads of educational R&D units in Australia and New Zealand. "The Political Situation of Teaching-Research Units," by Terry Hore, encourages the formation of alliances with past clients, student associations, administrator and staff associations, administration, faculties of education, external agencies, and other units as competition for decreasing funds becomes more intense. "Some Effects of Accreditation Procedures on the Role of Research and Development Units in Colleges of Advanced Education," by Roger Swain, postulates that accreditation constraints have changed the units' roles from largely consultative and entrepreneurial to cooperative involvement in the institutions' functions. In "Managing Education Units in Times of Stringency," Robert Taylor gives suggestions for R&D unit directors to help assure survival in difficult economic times. "The Centre for the Advancement of Teaching at McQuarie University" (Australia), by Rex Meyer, explains how diversity in that R&D unit has prompted expansion. John Powell's "New Roles for Units?" recommends that units take on new functions such as departmental reviews throughout the university, or the evaluation of teaching and courses for increased accountability. In "New Roles for Units," Alan Lonsdale encourages R&D unit involvement in policy analysis and long-range planning for the institutions. The essays focus on Australia and New Zealand. Appended are the meeting agenda and list of participants. (MSE)

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Educational Research and Development Units: A Report

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Educational Research and Development Units: A Report

Papers presented for discussion at the annual meeting of directors and heads of educational research and development units in Australia and New Zealand, June 1978.

Edited by Robert A. Cannon
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Individual contributors

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PREFACE

It has become an accepted practice for the directors of educational research and development units in Australia and New Zealand to meet informally before the annual conference of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia. In 1978 the meeting of directors focussed on the likely future situation of teaching and research units. A number of directors prepared discussion papers for the meeting. These papers are reproduced in this publication.

Robert Cannon
The University of Adelaide
(Directors' Meeting Convenor, 1978)

THE POLITICAL SITUATION OF TEACHING-RESEARCH UNITS

Terry Hore, Director, Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit, Monash University

All politics are based on the indifference of the majority.
(Reston, 1968)

While the university is a conglomerate of elements promoting the university's continuing existence - each element has its own rationale for that commitment. One area, *Deans Power Politics*, is closed to all of us except by influencing particular deans and the second area, *Professorial Power Politics*, is open, theoretically, to those of us who are professors or who have a seat on Professorial Boards. The bases for the majority of decisions, are made within those corridors of power where few of us walk. For example, how many of us would be invited to dinner parties at the Vice-Chancellor's house or would invite known power figures to dine with us? Given this blocked channel of communication, units generally are politically weak.

Even if what we wish to say *is* heard, the individual power groups' rationale will make true the statement by Cornford (1908) in *Microcosmographia Academica* that:

> You think (do you not?) that you have only to state a reasonable case, and people must listen to reason and set upon it at once ... if you want to move them, you must address your arguments to prejudice and the political motive.

In terms of access to the hidden decision making mechanisms then, units are weak; in terms of the support of the majority of the academic population - units are weak.

In times of financial hardship questions are asked which in growth times would not be questioned - the Adelaide and Macquarie problems

would probably not have arisen in wealthier days.*

How does one acquire political influence? Cornford says you acquire it the same way you acquire gout, by sitting tight and drinking port wine!

But perhaps the more realistic way in today's climate would be to become more active politically rather than remaining objectively neutral. How? Two major routes seem open to us: the first is in a role as a catalyst within the system, to come out with a point of view on controversial issues, to challenge the administration and the academic staff to think about foreseeable problems and think through the implications of those problems for higher education, for their students and for themselves. One of the greatest difficulties is persuading academic staff to take these problems seriously; very few yet are concerned about the potential effects upon them of the steady state. *The Future of Higher Education in Australia* (Hore, Linke and West, 1978) and the forthcoming conference on "Tertiary Education: the Aftermath of Expansion" arranged by the Office for Research in Academic Methods and the Education Research Unit at the Australian National University are examples of attempts at raising the level of consciousness.

Another way of making views known is by nominating for council or senate positions. Although I have spoken earlier about the hidden decision making processes, at least by observing the power-figures in operation and by quiet lobbying before and after the meeting, useful information can be gained and disseminated.

These suggestions are general and could be profitably pursued by all units, but size may have something to do with security; more specifically, the number of *academic* staff within the unit. The more there are, the safer the unit may be from would-be rapists! This first route means that units, by taking a stand on issues, will be living

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* At the time this paper was presented, both the Advisory Centre for University Education at the University of Adelaide and the Centre for Advancement of Teaching at Macquarie University were the subject of institutional reviews.

more dangerously than they have before and will raise questions like "From which quarter can we expect/or nurture support?" This leads to the second area.

The second major area of political activity is in creating a system of alliances. Some of the points mentioned here may be institution-specific and not generally applicable. However, I raise them for consideration.

With whom should we seek alliances?

1) Past clients. One would like to think that past customers would be supportive of the work units do and, in most cases, if we have helped them at all, they will be. But, how many of them are there? Recently, at the Newcastle Conference, Marcel Goldschmid gave a 'variously reported' figure of 1%-10%. If that figure means 10% of the population never previously attending our workshops each year, then its not too far off. With returning clients, the figure is probably no greater than 20%. The problem is that they include few of the power figures - so they are relatively a small number of people and small in terms of political clout.

   From recent experience, it now seems more useful to work with departments as the target rather than open workshops for individuals. The cohesion developed in the department works for the unit as well as the department and brings in senior level staff who may not otherwise attend workshops.

2) Student associations. Remember that the impetus for most units came from the student representation to the Australian Universities Commission (Australian Universities Commission, Fifth Report, 1972, Section 8.58). With the increasing numbers of mature age students who are more vocal about poor teaching and used to playing a greater role in decision making, one may find that active links to the student body at undergraduate and postgraduate levels would be useful, and may be the ultimate weapon against the closure of a unit since such closure implies that all aspects of teaching/

learning are unable to be improved. How many students would accept that?

3) Administrators and staff associations. Unit staff can often forge links between administrators and the unions to the advantage of all concerned. Increased unionization and staff militancy will be an inevitable result of the blockage in the promotion system. Until now, staff turnover has been fairly rapid - 28% in 1967, 7.6% in 1976 and a much lower figure today. Natural wastage - death, and retirement (or 'pedagogicide' as one writer put it) is not going to help, because senior academic staff are relatively young (47 years on average at Monash). Retirement patterns over the next five years (according to the *Report for the 1977-79 Triennium* (Australian Universities Commission, 1976)) are stated as being of the order of less than one-half of 1% of the academic staff of lecturer and above.

Administrators need information in order to assist with policy decisions, especially now as most of the interventions necessary to find 'flexible' money (money not tied to salaries and other fixed costs) can only be done at the expense of some staff reductions. (Most institutions need over 85% of their recurrent funds to pay the wages bill.) Research into staffing areas such as early retirement, fractional appointments are at the thin edge of this wedge, with investigations of the goals of the institution at the other. Both groups, administration and unions, need this information.

4) Administration. With accountability pressures has come an emphasis on outcome measures. These include questions about academic productivity in research and teaching; value of the graduate to the community and value of higher education to the graduate. Up to now, the stance of units has been 'to sit tight and drink port'. I now question whether we should rethink that position! Perhaps the time is nearer when we should move towards direct involvement in faculty evaluation.

5) Faculties of education. Depending on the management, some units are vulnerable in having no dean to state their case when the money

is divided. A currently strong advisory committee may not always be so. The additional advantage of having one's own graduate students has much to commend it. Again, I suggest the time may be ripe, for the smaller units particularly, to reconsider a move towards the 'department within a faculty of education' model (Hall, 1977).

6) External agencies. Outside contracts and consultancies not only bring flexible money into the unit, but also add to the prestige of the university and the unit if the task is performed efficiently and within the deadlines and estimated costs. One area likely to open to units is in the area of evaluation studies in the whole tertiary sector. This could provide one area where units could form a tighter allegiance between themselves. The TEC Report for 1979-81 Triennium (Section 4.86) suggests that these studies could be intra-institutional or across institutional and state boundaries.

7) Other units. The annual meeting of directors of units is witness to the spiritual support, if nothing else, of liaison between units.

However, I see a danger of units acting as a microcosm of the total system of forming alliances within this small group to the exclusions of other alliances. *Is* communication between the units as open as we pretend it is? Can it be? Should it be?

Conclusion

There is little doubt that new internal conflicts will arise as the battle for scarce resources intensifies. Sitting back and drinking port wine may, in fact, make us *more* vulnerable than taking an active role in jolting staff out of their growth-provided, and until now, comfortable rut.

I close with this thought:

If "Politics is the art of preventing people from taking part in affairs which properly concern them" (Valery, 1943), then units should be involved in *anti-politics*.

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SOME EFFECTS OF ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES ON THE ROLE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNITS IN COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Roger Swain, Head, Research and Development Department, Adelaide College of Advanced Education (now Principal Education Officer, Research Branch, Department of Further Education, South Australia

During the last five years I have become increasingly aware of three problems which, in one form or another, are the concern of most research and development units of tertiary institutions. These problems are:

- Where staff development programmes are based on voluntary attendance, to a large extent, the better performing staff members attend, while those most in need of 'development' do not. The common defence to this observation is that the better lecturers who learn further skills act as pacemakers and catalysts for a general improvement in teaching standards. This defence is at best an unresearched hypothesis.

  Conversely, where compulsory participation in staff development programmes is required, problems of morale and credibility arise.

- Where the initiation of course evaluation projects depend on a request from the course co-ordinator, very often the courses nominated for evaluation are well planned and developed and the evaluation results in recommendations that may lead to significant but not major improvements. Conversely, the co-ordinators of courses that may profit most from evaluation are unlikely to nominate.

- Research and development units frequently have an identity problem within their institutions. This comes partly from not being a formal part of either the academic or administrative divisions of the institutions, but mainly from the difficulty of establishing a

legitimate role that is recognised and valued by both these divisions. The recognition of this role becomes important when there is competition for decreasing institutional resources.

A partial solution to these problems has been forced on many colleges of advanced education in the last few years by the pressures of financial stringencies, changing enrolment preferences and the accreditation procedures.

Colleges of advanced education are largely funded on a per capita basis up to the enrolment ceiling that is determined by the appropriate state authority. Thus, to cover recurrent expenses, particularly salaries, the colleges must offer a range of courses of such quality and relevance as to attract the required number of students. However, these courses must be accredited at the state level and classified and registered at the national level. To gain accreditation, the course submission must contain extensive information on the community need and student demand for the course. Additionally, the submission must detail a programme for on-going evaluation of the course. An example of a statement of such a programme is attached as Appendix 1.

After five years, re-accreditation of a course is required and part of the basis for re-accreditation is evidence of course evaluation and development.

The effect of these requirements is that college lecturers come to see that working with the research and development unit is in both their own and the college's best interests. As departments become aware of decreases in enrolments in the previously major courses (e.g. pre-service teacher education) they realise that to maintain staff and funding that new courses to cater for a different clientele are necessary (e.g. in-service teacher education). Potential new courses must be thoroughly researched to demonstrate a major community need as evidenced, for example, in employment opportunities, and to indicate there will be an adequate demand for enrolment in the course. The

surveys and other research approaches used to define community need and student demand can also provide valuable information on student characteristics, desirable course aims and content, appropriate teaching strategies and assessment methods.

Often this information leads to the construction of courses employing significantly different instructional modes to those used in previous courses. Lecturers can thus appreciate the need for staff development activities to enable them to co-ordinate and effectively participate in the new courses. Activities resulting from such developments seem to have at least two important advantages over many other approaches to staff development. Firstly, much of the initiative and persuasion to participate in the activities comes from the staff of a particular department or course itself, rather than externally; and, secondly, the activities have a focus and relevance that is generally accepted and appreciated by the participants.

Similarly, with course evaluation programmes, the staff involved appreciate the need for these programmes to be of such a quality as to help ensure the re-accreditation of the course and the continued attraction of enrolments. This appreciation tends to promote co-operation and thoroughness.

Although accreditation procedures have produced desirable changes in the range of evaluation studies and involvement in staff development activities, they have also tended to reduce the flexibility of both research and development units and of course development at the colleges. Appendix 2 details the involvement of the college committee system in the development of new courses. Such involvement takes up a considerable amount of time for college staff in general and research and development personnel in particular. Also, apparent in this document is the requirement for a lead time of up to three years between starting to plan a new course and implementing that course. This requirement contrasts strongly with the technical and further education and university sectors where new courses may be introduced with less

than twelve months notice.

In summary, the requirements of accreditation and other constraints on colleges of advanced education have prompted a change in the roles of research and development units from a largely consultative and entrepreneurial function to one that tends more to co-operative involvement in the line functions of the colleges.

APPENDIX 1 *

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

The College has a commitment to a model of the curriculum process in which a course is initially constructed in accord with the best available information on the nature and extent of the community needs to be met by the course; the vocational, educational and personal aspirations of prospective enrollees as well as their personal characteristics and readiness, the role and resources of the College and the socio-cultural-political milieu in which the course is to be conducted. However, the College recognises that such information is often limited and inaccurate, that the processes of curriculum construction involve assumptions and compromises, and that the nature of community needs, the students aspirations and characteristics, and the educational environment are constantly changing. Therefore, the College has elaborated its concept of the curriculum process into a dynamic model which emphasises continual development as a result of regular evaluation and review. Five distinct stages of evaluation are distinguished.

Suitability of course aims

The initial stage of evaluation is concerned with assessing the suitability of proposed course aims in terms of the educational and social needs of the community as suggested by surveys, staff perceptions, interviews and consultations with key people in the employment and community areas to be served by the course.

Course and course unit construction

The course structure and the content of course units are determined by a College working party[1] in consultation with other College staff and a Course Advisory Committee including authorities external to the College. The products of the working party are submitted to the College's Courses and Curricula Committee to evaluate the appropriateness of: the course structure and units with regard to the effectiveness in producing the learnings required by the course aims, the selection of content and teaching strategies within the course units, and whether the modes of course unit evaluation are likely to provide a valid and reliable assessment of the extent of attainment of course unit objectives.

Individual readiness and progress

The College encourages lecturers to monitor individual readiness and progress of students by such devices as examining the previous educational attainments of incoming students, conducting formative evaluat-

[1] In the case of teacher education courses, particularly at the pre-service level, a number of working parties are involved. These include groups with extensive school staff membership, who consider the school based aspects of the programme.

ions and content analysing student assessments. Additionally, a pre-requisite and co-requisite system is used to ensure students have appropriate bases for further learning and the College's Admissions and Progress Committee monitors and facilitates the progress of students, individually and collectively.

Formative evaluation

Lecturers at the College are encouraged to establish programmes for improved effectiveness and course unit development by such devices as analyses of objective attainment, item analyses and surveys of students' opinions and progress.

Summative evaluation

When a course has been in progress for some years, the opportunity exists for the College to evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting the educational needs of the community that motivated the creation of the course. To achieve this purpose, the College conducts follow-up surveys of graduates from the course and also surveys employers, clients and other members of the community in a position to assess the performance of graduates from the course.

The research and development unit

For each of these stages of course evaluation, the services of the College Research and Development Unit are available to staff, committees and working parties engaged in course construction and development. Since the formation of the Unit in 1974, staff of the unit have been active in conducting surveys of potential, present and past students and in aiding lecturing staff in formative evaluation. Additionally, the unit has conducted analyses of student progress, surveyed the adequacy of College facilities and has been heavily involved in the activities of relevant College committees.

** Reproduced with permission from Adelaide College of Advanced Education (1976) Proposed courses: Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education submitted to the South Australian Board of Advanced Education, September, 1976. Adelaide, South Australia.*

APPENDIX 2 *

APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES

1. New course proposals may arise from any source in the College and from the outside community.

2. These proposals need to be tested initially for their feasibility. This is achieved by submitting to the Academic Planning Committee a preliminary C1 statement. This covers:

   a) the award sought;

   b) the need for the course, particularly community need;

   c) the purposes of the course, particularly skills, qualities, abilities expected of the graduate and the fields of employment which the graduates may expect;

   d) estimated student demand over two triennia (at least);

   e) the relationship to other courses offered in the College and elsewhere. The basic question to be answered is: Why introduce new courses if the community need can be satisfied in other ways?;

   f) the course structure - length of course, units to be offered, options available (this can be a general statement);

   g) staffing, library and other resources required for the course, particularly in the first three years. What additional resources to the College are required. (Resources covers staff, equipment and buildings.);

   h) entry requirements.

3. If the Academic Planning Committee supports further consideration of the proposal, the Courses and Curricula Committee is asked to make a detailed evaluation as set out in 4 below. This action is noted by the Academic Board and the Council. If there are unresolved differences between the proponents of the course and the Academic Planning Committee, the Academic Board is asked to make a decision.

   If the proposal is regarded as feasible, the Academic Planning Committee sets the date for the commencement of the programme; this date will usually be in terms of a triennium, although the particular year in the triennium may be specified (note the desirable timetable as set out in paragraph 7 below).

4. The Courses and Curricula Committee is concerned with detailed examination of the proposal, including those items listed in 2 above. The Committee will probably want to initiate through the Research and Development Unit a detailed survey of the potential market for the course to clarify need and demand. It discusses in

detail course aims, unit objectives, duration and patterns of study and admission and assessment requirements. The Committee is advised by an Area Advisory Committee composed of people from within the College and from relevant professional bodies and academic disciplines.

The Courses and Curricula Committee reports regularly to the Academic Planning Committee and Academic Board on the detailed considerations and should seek the Academic Planning Committee's reactions to any proposed significant changes to the preliminary C1 document. The Academic Planning Committee and Academic Board will, in turn, inform the Courses and Curricula Committee of any developments which would affect the priority or development of the programme.

5. At the appropriate time, the Courses and Curricula Committee will form a working party to develop the Stage III document. Representation on the working party will be drawn from the Courses and Curricula Committee, Advisory Committee (or its sub-committees, if relevant) and relevant areas in the College. As it will be a working party concerned with the interchange of ideas and the development of proposals, it is important that it be as small as possible and certainly not more than five people. Its convenor will be responsible for organizing the working party, co-ordinating member's efforts, and drafting the final document. In view of the time required for this last task, it is desirable that the convenor have a reduced workload to facilitate completion of the Stage III document.

   The working party will report to the Courses and Curricula Committee. In its deliberations, this Committee will seek the views of the Advisory Committee.

6. The Stage III document will require approval of the Courses and Curricula Committee, Academic Board and the Council. Developments in the Stage III document which require changes to the preliminary C1 document, will need to be approved by the Academic Planning Committee.

7. The desirable timetable for submission of new course proposals is as follows:

0	- Start of course (year)
minus 8 months	- Stage III document to the Board of Advanced Education
minus 9 months	- Final C1 document to the Board of Advanced Education
minus 12 months	- Stage II document to the Board of Advanced Education
minus 14 months	- Draft Stage III document to be available for internal consideration

minus 36 months - Initiation of proposal - submission of preliminary C1 document to the Academic Planning Committee.

** Reproduced with permission from Adelaide College of Advanced Education (1976) Proposed courses: Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education submitted to the South Australian Board of Advanced Education, September, 1976. Adelaide, South Australia.*

MANAGING EDUCATION UNITS IN TIMES OF STRINGENCY

Robert Taylor, Head, Educational Development Department, Footscray Institute of Technology

The comments that follow should be read in the context of an operator of a small education unit operating in a medium-sized college of advanced education. The unit has had no history of substantial educational research, but deals mainly with the immediate problems faced by lecturers.

Firstly, why must the question of managing units in times of stringency be considered? In times of stringency all educational programmes come under strictest surveilance and analysis. Education units could be seen as luxuries by some teaching departments and therefore vulnerable. Education units may be seen as especially vulnerable because other non-teaching areas such as Library, Computing Services, Student Services and Maintenance can be seen as having a more immediate response to the needs of their clients when compared with education units whose 'service' may be less identifiable. Quite often, education units are also the newest of the service areas in their institutions. They are often the smallest, and have had less time than others to make their presence felt within the education institution. Education units also typically concentrate their efforts on staff and are therefore one step removed from the direct teaching and learning environment. Thus, because of their size and newness, they often lack the political power to make significant impact on decision making authorities. Given these realities, how then can a unit survive the pressures upon it and fulfil its functions properly?

The principle suggestion made here is that a major evaluation of the effectiveness of the unit should be undertaken by the unit. The reason

for this approach is that the unit may be at variance with the institutional goals because:

- the unit has changed direction due to the personalities involved in it;
- the institution has changed direction and the unit has not kept up with this change; or
- the unit's perception of the needs of the institution have not been accurate.

It is not proposed that this evaluation be a strictly formal matter unless it is absolutely necessary, because this exposes units to criticisms of attempting to justify their own existence. Instead, it is suggested that reasonably regular formal feedback systems be established, both to ascertain the effectiveness of services, and to assist in the promotion of these services. If there is an organizational framework already set up, for example an advisory committee set under a board of studies, then education units should make the best use of them. Heads of education units should get these committees convened as much as they can justify, to discuss the problems faced by the units, the new programmes the unit wishes to commence, the development of new areas or involvement and other matters. This system not only alerts members of the organization to the problems faced by the unit, but is an extremely good form of public relations.

If the organization does not have such a committee, then the head of the education unit should attempt to set one up, either on an informal basis or, preferably, on a formal basis with reporting responsibilities to a more senior body. Through this mechanism, the unit will be seen as being accountable to a wider population and is thus less vulnerable to challenge. This proposal is on-going. What, in the meantime, can education units look at to improve their management in times of stringency? The following are suggestions which the writer has found useful from experience in his own environment.

1. Spread yourself as thinly as possible without sacrificing quality. Become an initiator. If there are too many demands made on you, choose priorities carefully to cover a maximum cross-section of the institution, including administration and other service areas. If you are unable to help due to full commitment, make sure that the requester knows why you can't help.

2. Work on small projects rather than large ones. Projects which demand maximum involvement for short periods of time create the best impression. Long complicated projects suffer from the danger of being swamped by the unknown pressures of the future.

3. Work at the individual or small group level rather than at the large department, faculty or school level. (This is linked with the previous suggestion.) If a person feels that you have helped them directly, then that person is more likely to speak up for you in times of crisis.

4. Swallow your educational pride and work on jobs which are less intellectually stimulating to yourself, if necessary. Simple projects with simple and immediately identifiable results are often more useful than longer and more complex programmes which have results whose use is less obvious.

5. Attempt to avoid as much as possible the 'so what' phenonema. This phenonema occurs when a report is produced which has obviously taken a significant amount of time, but the conclusions raise a question 'So what?'.

6. Be seen around the institution, get involved in areas outside your own, but not to the extent that your principle responsibilities suffer. Be seen in corridors and staff rooms and on appropriate committees.

7. If there is a job to be done, do it, at least as an interim measure. Do not wait for other sections of your institution to take up the slack. Be careful, however, not to be drawn away from your central purpose.

8. Communicate regularly, via staff bulletins, unit newsletters, and memos. Be practical with your communications. Actively promote your usefulness to your academic colleagues without seeming to attempt to be justifying your own existence.

In summary, get as close as you possibly can to what the *members* of the organization expect of you, rather than what job specification or unit guidelines say, and work on getting those guidelines as close to reality as possible.

THE CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING AT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Rex Meyer, Director, Centre for Advancement of Teaching, Macquarie University

The Centre for Advancement of Teaching (CAT) at Macquarie has differed to some extent from other university educational research units in Australia in encompassing three areas of major responsibility: staff and organizational development; audio visual production; and continuing education for the teaching and training profession in the community at large. This diversity of function has been, in the past, a major difficulty in the development of the Centre, especially as the University has been unable to maintain a balanced growth in the appointment of academic and technical staff. At one stage, for example, the audio visual component amounted to about 80% of the activity of the Centre simply because of an uneven allocation of resources. The diversity, however, has proved in the longer term, to be the salvation of the unit. As budgets contracted and as we moved towards a 'no-growth' phase in the history of Macquarie, several trends have converged that now lead to a strengthening of the roles and status of the functions of the Centre.

The first of these trends has been a change in attitude of Macquarie staff towards the significance and value of the Centre's role in the production of audio visual materials. As new staff ceilings have been applied 'across the board', academic staff have turned with greater appreciation towards the audio visual services and facilities provided by CAT. Despite severe cut-backs, we are still able to provide a basic audio visual service and this has been perceived as highly supportive by a beleagured academic community. The audio visual service could not, therefore, be cut back further without a major outcry from University staff.

The second trend is the growing awareness by University authorities of the significance of staff and organizational development. In the past, CAT has catered for this need through provision of a consultancy service for staff members and by means of centrally mounted training courses based on a minicourse format. As we have approached the no-growth phase, the staff turnover has naturally fallen to almost zero and the centrally mounted courses, catering as they did mainly for newly appointed staff, can no loger serve their traditional role. This change has highlighted the need for an alternative approach to staff development and has focused the attention of the University on the possibility of strengthening its staff counselling and organizational programmes.

The third trend has been a concomitant of the second. As the central staff training courses have attracted fewer and fewer Macquarie staff, CAT has filled course vacancies by attracting personnel from a wide range of tertiary institutions and community training units in the Sydney area. This expansion of continuing education functions has represented a major re-orientation and strengthening of CAT's status. It has also meant the generation of considerable independent finance. This finance comes from course fees and from the sale of additional copies of training manuals produced for each minicourse. In 1978, income to the Centre from these sources has amounted to approximately $60,000 ($26,000 from fees and $35,000 from the sale of manuals). Generation of an independent source of income such as this has ensured the continued re-appointment of tutorial staff and, indeed, has virtually guaranteed the expansion of our functions in spite of a contraction in most other facets of the University.

These various trends have coincided with the appointment of Macquarie's new Vice-Chancellor, Professor E. Webb (since 1976). Our new Vice-Chancellor has instituted a series of investigations into interdisciplinary units on campus and has already reviewed and strengthened the Centres for Environmental Studies and Business Administration. It is now CAT's turn to be appraised in this way. While the outcome of this

appraisal is not yet known, it is already clear that the trends described above, namely a greater appreciation of the role of audio visual media by Macquarie staff, an increased awareness by the authorities of the importance of staff and organizational development and expansion of the continuing education programme, have become too well established to be eliminated or reduced. It would be extremely unlikely that the 'inquiry' into CAT would suggest policies leading to a reduction in these areas - quite the contrary. We can expect considerable expansion in both staff development and continuing education and, at least, a maintenance of the present level of our audio visual service. What is likely to happen, however, is that the great expansion of the continuing education function will be reorganized by splitting off and further developing that area through the establishment of a Centre for Continuing Education. It would then be logical to separate the audio visual and staff development functions.

In conclusion, therefore, there is the likelihood that the present roles and functions of CAT will be maintained and expanded, but that this expansion will occur as part of an administrative re-arrangement involving the formation of three new units. This expansion has been made possible largely because the Centre's original terms of reference has enabled it to generate 'independent money' through the 'sale of services' to the wider educational community. The provision of continuing education has virtually guaranteed a healthy future and an expanded programme for CAT or its successors.

NEW ROLES FOR UNITS?

John Powell, Acting Director, Tertiary Education Research Centre, University of New South Wales

Before considering possibilities for the future, it is worth reminding ourselves of what was said in the 1973 AVCC Report on the work of higher education units and the guidelines for the future which it recommended (AVCC, 1973). Here are three quotations:

There is now, more than ever before, pressure on administrators to examine their institution critically - its objectives and processes - and to effect changes where these are deemed necessary. There is pressure on teachers to improve their courses of study; to develop effective ways of facilitating students' learning; and to evaluate their own performance as well as that of their students.

(Centres have been) ... charged with the responsibility of carrying out institutional research and development with the objective of improving an understanding of institutional characteristics, and to facilitate change or improvements. A special task of these centres has been to initiate improvements in instruction to improve the quality of the teaching/learning process.

(The creation of Centres reflects) ... the emergence of what is essentially instructional accountability, the need to provide evidence to all concerned with University education that serious attempts are being made to make the educational programme as effective and efficient as conditions and present knowledge will allow.

These all have a very familiar and contemporary ring: the general tenor of the Report fits remarkably well with the current scene, especially with the mounting demand for increased accountability within the tertiary system as a whole. It seems unlikely that these basic purposes of higher education units will change dramatically over the next few years. What we should be examining more closely, however, is the appropriateness of the current state of balance between the major activities in which these units engage. Incidentally, the Report lays considerable stress upon the significance of the personalities of unit

Directors in relation to the ways in which individual units have developed. Perhaps we should also ask ourselves why this should be so - and whether it is desirable.

When one looks at the work of the units, one is struck by the fact that relatively little attention has been given to the solution of basic research problems. During the past ten years, there has been little by way of substantial publication of studies of historical, sociological, philosophical, psychological and methodological aspects of higher education. This is presumably because very little work of this character has been undertaken: the units have not seen this task as one of their major responsibilities. Yet the units, assuming that they have the appropriate intellectual resources, would seem to provide a natural milieu for this type of research. The AVCC Report made the point that the educational effectiveness of institutions should be pushed as far as 'present knowledge will allow'. This carries the implication that this knowledge base should be constantly extended by the work of the staff of the units, yet there is little evidence that this is being done. It is not satisfactory, given our current state of knowledge, to be too parasitic and dependent upon others providing us with the basic information required to carry out our other tasks effectively. I would argue, therefore, for a change of emphasis here to correct the current imbalance.

To take one example of a neglected area: we know very little about learning in higher education - how it is related to student characteristics, methods of teaching and assessment, course design, teacher characteristics and institutional environments. Yet it is difficult to see how the quality of teaching can be improved without greatly increasing our understanding of the many complex factors involved in this area: lacking an adequate knowledge base we can do no more than skate on the surface of the problem.

Another example is efforts to assist with the professional development of academic staff. A good deal of effort has been put into this in

recent years, but the results have been disappointing. To a large extent this is because we know very little about the underlying factors which influence the success of staff development programmes and this is related to the fact that the academic profession in Australia has not been seen as a group worthy of systematic study.

My major suggestion, therefore, is that some shift of emphasis and intellectual resources is required to close some of the gaps in the knowledge base which many of our other activities pre-suppose to have been already filled. A good deal of work of this type can be undertaken without a major reduction in such activities as course development and evaluation: relevant data can often be collected simultaneously once the problems have been clearly identified.

Another area in which there is a need for fresh approaches is that of staff development. The steady state condition requires institutions and individual academics to look much more closely - and to do something as a result! - at the professional needs of staff. Professional development programmes need to be conceived in much broader terms than they have been in the past and we are currently working towards this in the Tertiary Education Research Centre. Implementation of such programmes will almost certainly require a larger investment of unit resources.

There is also a need for more attention to be given to broader policy issues through systematic examination of long-term developments and alternative courses of action with their supporting rationales and implications.

Units could also find themselves called upon by other institutions to carry out research and development studies on a commissioned basis. There have already been a number of examples of this and the demand could increase substantially over the next few years.

There could, however, be demands for different emphases or the adoption of new roles emanating from other sources both within and without

our institutions of higher education. For example, there is some logic in administrators seeking to involve units in departmental reviews of the type now institutionalised at the Australian National University.

There is even more logic in it being thought appropriate for units to be much more heavily involved in the evaluation of teaching and courses for the purposes of increased accountability.

The acceptance of such demands would inevitably conflict with other roles, especially those involved in the facilitation of educational change and non-judgmental efforts aimed at improving teaching skills. It would also seriously compromise the independence of units by identifying them with the essentially non-educational functions of institutional administration. If this were to happen then one of the most valuable innovations in post-war tertiary education would be destroyed.

NEW ROLES FOR UNITS

Alan Lonsdale, Educational Development Unit,
Western Australian Institute of Technology

Two brief anecdotes:
Several years ago, a senior administrator at the Western Australian Institute of Technology stated that if the newly formed Educational Development Unit (EDU) were successful, he would expect to see a reduction in drop-out rates, an increase in graduation rates and, generally, an improvement in those quantitative indicators often used to judge the productivity of educational institutions.

Was this a reasonable view?

More recently, members of the EDU were involved in discussions with the Counselling Service, to explore the relationships between the institutional roles of the two areas. In response to the question, "Well, why does the EDU exist, and what does it do?", the standard patter (which had been developed in response to many previous similar questions), was given. After some discussion, the counsellor pointed out that he saw a considerable discrepancy between what the EDU aimed to achieve and what it was actually doing. As he put it, "You are really only nibbling around the edges of a very large and complicated problem".

The student counsellor was recognising the complexity of the organizational system which operates in institutions of higher education, and the large number of inter-related components which constitute that system. The senior administrator referred to previously wasn't. Concern with the complexity and inter-related nature of the system is the basic theme of this paper.

Why new roles for units? One might be tempted to think that units are

concerned to find new - and better - ways of performing their research and development functions, so that they more effectively contribute to the functioning of their institutions and higher education generally. However, the discussions here today certainly do not reinforce that view. Rather, one is left with the impression that there is much gloom and doom concerning the future of units, and that the major reason for seeking new roles is in order to survive - which may imply that units are not succeeding in their existing roles. I take the stand that an essential ingredient of success is to aim to improve our impact on the quality of the educational process. Perhaps it is true that the real extent of our impact in these terms is low - how many of us can truthfully claim that the educational experiences enjoyed (?) by students throughout an institution are significantly improved by the activities of that institution's unit? This is not to suggest that we are currently doing the wrong things, but rather that the success of what we are doing is considerably limited by a lack of appreciation of the range of organizational components which impinge on the educational process, and which may often interfere with our activities.

New roles for units? But first, what are units currently doing? All of us would be involved in some combination of the following activities:

- Staff development
- Formal teaching programmes
- Course and teacher evaluation
- Course/instructional development
- Encouragement of, and experimentation with, innovative approaches to teaching
- Action research and policy oriented research
- Small grant programmes
- Individual and group consultations
- Media services
- Dissemination of information

This is a fairly formidable and comprehensive list. How could units

do more than this? What different things could they do?

Notice that, in the main, these various activities are concerned directly with the instructional process. The implicit assumption underlying most (in some cases, all?) of our work is that we should attack directly at the apparent point of concern - the instructional process. Hence there is heavy emphasis in our work on such activities as staff development, course development and evaluation, research into instructional processes, and media services.

The well-worn medical analogy is certainly appropriate - do we tend to treat the symptom, while ignoring the cause?

A period spent with the Center for Futures Research at the University of Southern California last year, led me to appreciate far more fully the complexity of the system when one is concerned with change, planned change, and long range planning. Organizational systems are analogous to biological systems; we need to see the organization as a complex and living system. Biological-type feedback systems operate; a build-up of activity in one part of the system results in activities in other parts of the system which tend to restore homeostasis. Any decision or action can impact on, and have implications for, other apparently unrelated components of the system; a wide range of pre-requisites and pre-conditions may be necessary for a specific action to have its intended result.

What are the elements in the system? What are the organizational components which impinge on the quality of the educational process? Material derived from a project in 1976, which aimed to explore the dimensions of policy relating to the development of academic staff, serves to provide some insights into these questions (Lonsdale, 1976). It was significant that,whilst aspects which relate directly to staff development (such as study leave, in-service programmes and encouragement of research) were commented on, a major preoccupation of those consulted was with more indirect institutional factors which were

considered to profoundly influence staff development and professionalism. These factors are inter-related in complex ways. To illustrate the inter-relationships, if one commences with the premise that 'a major goal of the Institute is to achieve excellence in teaching', then *one* line of argument goes as follows:

	POLICY IMPLICATIONS
1. A major goal of the Institute is to achieve excellence in teaching	Clarify goals of the Institute
2. To achieve this, staff need to be excellent teachers	Recruitment policies
3. We therefore require a staff development programme which strongly encourages and supports activities concerned with the improvement of teaching	Priorities for staff development activities
4. But staff will only be attracted to such a programme if they see tangible rewards arising	Criteria for promotion and progression
5. And they can only participate if mechanisms exist to provide the necessary time and financial assistance	Financing of study leave
6. The factors which influence time available for staff development include:	Study leave policies, mini-fellowships, sabbatical systems, etc.
a) provision of time release	Teaching methods Course structures Staffing formulae policies
b) using teaching time more efficiently, reduction of teaching loads, reduction of contact hours	Functioning of heads of departments as educational leaders and managers; departmental organization
c) timetabling of staff	
d) improving the effectiveness and reducing the frequency of committee meetings requires improved efficiency of departmental operation and may require increased decentralisation of decision making	Functioning of heads of departments as educational leaders and managers Decentralization of decision making

	POLICY IMPLICATIONS
7. A further important motivational factor is the support and encouragement staff receive from heads of departments	Functioning of heads of departments as educational leaders and managers
8. The ability of heads of departments to function as educational leaders and managers impinges directly on many aspects relating to staff development. Some of the factors which affect their functioning are:	
a) time pressures - the conflict between administration tasks and educational leadership;	Decentralisation of decision making Clarification of role of admin. area vis-a-vis academic operations Separation of administrative and academic roles at head level - through multiple appointments at heads of departments level Provision of administrative support to departments Rotating heads of departments, etc.
b) the actual skills heads of departments possess in terms of management and leadership of people and resources;	'Training' courses for heads and senior administrators in management Appointment criteria
c) the role and status of heads within the Institute structure	Staffing structures Decision making responsibilities
..... AND SO ON.	

A more systematic analysis results in the following list of factors affecting staff development. Most are at the institutional policy level.

Academic staff

Recruitment policies

Promotion and tenure policies

Staff development - Sabbatical/study leave
- In-service programmes
- Small grant programmes
- Conference attendance
- Research

Institutional

Institutional goals and priorities
Staffing formulae - budgetary procedures
Policy/decision making procedures
Teaching methods
Assessment procedures
Course structures

Departmental/Administrative

Decision making procedures
Functioning of heads of department

- as academic leaders
- as managers of resources

Development/training programmes for heads of departments and other senior staff

Departmental senior staffing policies.

Any other starting point and topic (for example, course development, media utilization, teaching innovations) would result in similar lists.

So what new roles emerge from this? Each institution and each unit is unique, so it is difficult to make specific suggestions. But some important ideas do emerge which provide food for thought.

1. The importance of a co-ordinated and *orchestrated* approach. (What is the point of investing a large proportion of a unit's resources on staff development, if promotion and tenure policies reward other staff endeavours?)
2. New opportunities for educational development are identified. (What can units do about the leadership skills of heads of department?)
3. Adding some local political know-how to the analysis might identify more cost-effective areas for our attention - where a relatively small push produces a significant result.

It is notable that some North American writers are starting to emphasize the importance of a co-ordinated approach to faculty development (Gaff, 1975).

Most, if not all, of the interactive components influencing staff development (or, more generally, educational development) involve questions of institutional policy. Perhaps, the most significant implication of this analysis is the possible role of units in the area of *policy analysis* or *policy research*. By policy analysis I mean the identification (including invention) and evaluation of policy alternatives, which includes analysis of the preconditions necessary for their implementation, and analysis of the consequences and cross-impacts of alternatives. Alternative staffing policies and their impacts on the educational process can obviously be analysed in this way. Two further examples might be of value:

a) There is currently considerable discussion on the implications of professional streaming in the pharmacy profession. To what extent should we be preparing pharmacists who are able to work in clinical pharmacy situations as well as those who work in retail settings? There are obvious implications for the structure, content and duration of pharmacy courses.

b) What should be policy concerning the development of the central library collection in a college? Should substantial funds be devoted to the further building of a collection? Such a policy may not be consistent with findings concerning the relatively low utilization of library materials by undergraduate students. Will a comprehensive collection become increasingly important as the role of the institute changes? Answering such questions requires in turn the analysis of policy concerning the goals and future development of the institution.

These two examples take us into the area of long range planning. But this is planning which is normative, qualitative and values based. It is concerned with questions like: 'Should we ...?, and 'What if ...?' It attempts to identify alternative future states and possibilities and, in turn, to identify and evaluate alternative policy responses. If you wish, this is futures research (Yehezkel Dror, 1971).

Why should units be involved in policy analysis in this way? There are three main reasons:

1. Because no-one else in our organizations is doing it. Time and financial constraints, limited expertise and the pressures of day-to-day decision making mean that others are not able to do so, even if they see the need. Units might be able to help.

2. Because the processes of planned change, educational development, organizational development and long range planning are all very inter-related.

3. Because it is important. In fact, it might even be the real key to educational development - and to survival.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Lonsdale, A.J. (1976) Policy determination project: development of academic staff - report on policy issues and alternatives. Educational Development Unit, Western Australian Institute of Technology.

If you have not already seen Gaff's book, it is worthwhile looking at. Gaff emphasises a co-ordinated approach across the areas of faculty, instructional and organizational development.

Gaff, J.G. (1975) Towards faculty renewal. Jossey-Bass.

Also of interest in this area are:

Bergquist, W.H. and Shoemaker, W.A. (eds.) (1976) A comprehensive approach to institutional development. New directions in higher education, No. 15. Jossey-Bass.

Smith, A.B. (1976) Faculty development and evaluation in higher education. ERIC/Higher Education Research Report Number 8. American Association for Higher Education.

One of the most useful books which expands (succinctly) on this approach to policy analysis is:

Yehezkel Dror, (1971) Design for policy sciences. American Elsevier.

PROGRAMME *APPENDIX ONE*

THURSDAY, 1 JUNE 1978

5.00-6.15 Arrival and registration

6.15 Dinner

Drinks will be available after dinner for an informal evening.

FRIDAY, 2 JUNE 1978

8.00-9.00 Breakfast

9.00-11.00 Educational research and development units: current problems and future prospects

Chairman: Robert Cannon, University of Adelaide

The purpose of this session is to identify major issues confronting units in the next decade and to work out what priorities and strategies we should develop. To stimulate and focus our discussion, six directors have agreed to speak briefly on the following issues:

(i) The political situation of units

Terry Hore, Monash University
Roger Swain, Adelaide CAE

(ii) Managing units in times of stringency

Rob Taylor, Footscray Institute
Rex Meyer, Macquarie University

11.00-11.30 Coffee

(iii) New roles for units

John Powell, University of New South Wales
Alan Lonsdale, W.A. Institute

12.30-2.00 Lunch

2.00-3.00 Educational research and development units: collaboration and co-operation

Chairman: Peter Sheldrake, Flinders University

This session will follow logically from the morning's discussions by clarifying the needs of units, seeing to what extent consensus exists and proposing directions for action in the next decade. Discussion will be initiated through the comments of Prof. S.S. Dunn (Chairman, ERDS) and Dr. H.S. Houston (Chairman, Advanced Education Council, TEC).

3.00-3.30 Coffee

3.30-4.30 Summing up

In this last hour plans for collaboration and cooperation will be finalized.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

APPENDIX TWO

Mr. John Anwyl	University of Melbourne
Mr. Alan Barton	Torrens College of Advanced Education
Dr. David Bennett	Australian National University
Mr. Robert Cannon	University of Adelaide
Mr. Peter Chippendale	Darling Downs Institute of Technology
Dr. Terry Crooks	University of Otago
Professor Syd Dunn	Education Research and Development Committee
Mr. Bernard Hawkins	Swinburne College of Technology
Mr. Norm Henry	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
Dr. Terry Hore	Monash University
Dr. Stewart Houston	Tertiary Education Commission
Mr. Alan Lonsdale	Western Australian Institute of Technology
Ms Jackie Lublin	New South Wales Institute of Technology
Dr. Rex Meyer	Macquarie University
Mr. Don Openshaw	Western Australian Institute of Technology
Dr. John Powell	University of New South Wales
Professor Ernest Roe	University of Queensland
Dr. Robert Ross	Griffith University
Mr. Peter Sheldrake	Flinders University
Dr. Harry Stanton	University of Tasmania
Mr. Roger Swain	Adelaide College of Advanced Education
Mr. Robert Taylor	Footscray Institute of Technology
Mr. Frank Warren	Cumberland College of Health Sciences
Mr. Rod Wellard	Lincoln Institute